

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 02481 061939Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2481

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, UY

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS

1. ON JULY 2 AND 3 I CALLED ON THE THREE COMMANDERS IN CHIEF OF THE URUGUAYAN ARMED FORCES, ARMY, NAVY AND AIR, TO DELIVER A SMALL BICENTENNIAL MEMENTO AND CONFIRM INVITATIONS FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY THE EMBASSY. DURING THE COURSE OF MY VISITS WITH THE COMMANDERS IN CHIEF OF THE NAVY, VADM. GONZALEZ, AND THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMY, GEN. VADORA, EACH OF THEM REFERRED TO THE TESTIMONY RECENTLY GIVEN IN THE U.S. BY WILSON FERREIRA ALDUNATE. THIS INTRODUCTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SUBJECT BY THEM AFFORDED ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT IN SOME DEPTH AND, AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY DONE WITH THE FONMINISTER, TO URGE THAT ALL STEPS BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE URUGUAYAN SYSTEMS, WHERE THERE ARE DEFICIENCIES, SO THAT VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WILL NOT OCCUR. I MADE SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY'S EMPHASIS ON THIS SUBJECT IN SANTIAGO, TO HIS SPEECH (OF WHICH WE HAD PREVIOUSLY SENT THEM COPIES), AND URGED THAT IN ITS EFFORTS TO DEMONSTRATE OPENNESS THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY SHOULD INVITE APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES, ESPECIALLY THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. I ACKNOWLEDGED TO THEM THAT IT FELT SOME ASPECTS OF WILSON FERREIRA'S TESTIMONY WERE INACCURATE, INCORRECT, OR EXAGGERATED. BUT I NOTED THAT THERE IS UNFORTUNATELY ENOUGH TRUTH IN
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PAGE 02 MONTEV 02481 061939Z

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ACCUSATIONS AS WELL AS THOSE OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, TO CAUSE CONCERN. I TOLD THEM THAT I HAD BEEN ASSURED BY THE FONMINISTER THAT VIOLATIONS ARE ALIEN TO THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND URGED THEM TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO SEE TO IT THAT THEY DO NOT OCCUR, ESPECIALLY SINCE INDIVIDUALS BELONGING TO POLICE OR SECURITY FORCES ARE THOSE WHO WOULD BE THE PERPETRATORS. BOTH OF THEM ASSURED ME THAT THEY SHARE OUR CONCERNS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND GEN. VADORA SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF INVITING THE IAHRC IS UNDER CONSIDERATION. WITH RESPECT TO WILSON FERREIRA ALDUNATE, GEN. VADORA NOTED THAT HIS EXILE HAS ALWAYS BEEN VOLUNTARY, THAT HIS WIFE AND SON LIVE HERE FREELY AND WITHOUT ANY MOLESTATION (EXCEPT HE NOTED THAT THE SON HAS BEEN PICKED UP FOR QUESTIONING ON ONE OR TWO OCCASIONS) AND THAT THEIR PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS HAVE IN NO WAY BEEN MOLESTED. HE NOTED, ALSO, THAT WILSON FERREIRA IS A LEGITIMATE POLITICAL LEADER. HE ADDED THAT ZELMAR MICHELINI ALSO WAS A LEGITIMATE POLITICAL LEADER AGAINST WITH WHOM THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO PARTICULAR CONCERN. HE STATED ALSO THAT MICHELINI'S EXILE WAS VOLUNTARY. HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD GUTIERREZ RUIZ, HOWEVER, WAS QUITE DIFFERENT. HE BLUNTLY CALLED HIM A TUPAMARO AND IN EFFECT A FUGITIVE WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN ARRESTED FOR HIS "CRIMINAL" ACTIVITIES HAD HE RETURNED TO URUGUAY. HE ALSO DEFENDED THE REFUSAL TO ALLOW GUTIERREZ RUIZ' COFFIN TO BE COVERED BY AN URUGUAYAN FLAG AT HIS BURIAL, SAYING THAT SUCH AN HONOR SHOULD NOT BE FOR A PERSON WITH HIS KIND OF RECORD.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE, BASICALLY, IS TO RECORD AGAIN MY DIRECT EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THIS IS THE SECOND OPPORTUNITY I HAVE HAD TO DO SO WITH GEN. VADORA WITH WHOM I HAVE DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT PREVIOUSLY.
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